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DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY, INDIA

KHAJURĀHO

By

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and

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51 Dir of Arch.

PREFACE

On the occasion of the visit of Their Excellencies Lord and Lady Irwin to Khajurāho in 1927, a Guide to the monuments at that place was written by Mr. B. L. Dhama, a Superintendent of the Archaeological Survey of India, and published by the Chhatarpur State. As this book had long been out of print, the task of bringing out a revised edition thereof was entrusted to Mr. S. C. Chandra, Assistant Superintendent, Northern Circle, Agra. In the present book Mr. Chandra has very largely utilized the descriptions of the temples as given by Mr. Dhama, but has at the same time incorporated fresh material and revised the text in many essential details. It is hoped that the book will meet the requirements of tourists visiting Khajurāho.

Greatful thanks are due to the Director, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, for the loan of a few photographs published in this book.

MADHO SARUP VATS

NEW DELHI : *Director General of Archaeology in India.*

August 1952

CONTENTS

	Page
General Information	1
Short History	3
Art and Architecture	7
The Temples	13
The Western group	13
The Eastern group	25
The Southern group	33
Jardine Museum	35
Bibliography	36

51 Dir of. Arch.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Kandāriya temple.

II. A. A *mithuna* group.
B. Agni.

III. Kandāriya temple, sculptured façade.

IV. Surasundarī figures.

V. A. A sculptured group.
B. A Surasundarī figure.

VI. Carved ceiling of Kandāriya temple.

VII. Śārdūla in Mahādeva temple.

VIII. Javāri temple.

IX. A. Jaina sculpture in Śāntinātha temple.
B. Statue of Buddha in Jardine Museum

X. Gateway in Jardine Museum.

XI. Plan of Lakshmaṇa temple.

XII. Plan of Khajurāho.

KHAJURĀHO

GENERAL INFORMATION

Khajurāho, a capital of the Chandellas, a medieval Central Indian dynasty, is situated in the Chhatarpur District of Vindhya Pradesh (previously the Chhatarpur State). It is 34 miles to the south of Mahobā, 27 miles east of Chhatarpur and 25 miles north of Pannā, and is accessible by good metalled roads both from Mahobā and Harpālpur Railway Stations on the Jhānsi-Mānikpur branch of the Central Railway. The distance from Harpālpur to Chhatarpur is 34 miles.

The Chhatarpur-Khajurāho road coincides with the Nowgong-Satnā road for over 20 miles, after which there is a branch road from the Bamiṭhā Police Station, leading direct to Khajurāho. The distance from Bamiṭhā to Khajurāho is 7 miles.

Khajurāho is now a small village situated at the south-east corner of the lake known as the Khajurāho

51 Dir. of Arch.

Sāgar or Ninorā Tāl ; but that it was once a large city is attested to by the extent of its ruins which cover an area of about 8 square miles.

The small rest house at Khajurāho is owned by the Mahārājā of Chhatarpur ; permission to occupy it may be obtained through the Chhatarpur Collectorate.

SHORT HISTORY

The Chandellas.—The Chandellas, who ruled over Jejākabhukti (Bundelkhand) from the ninth to thirteenth centuries, were a Rajput tribe, claiming descent from the Moon.

The first few princes of the dynasty do not seem to have been of much consequence, and it was not till the reigns of Harsha and his son Yaśovarman (first half of the tenth century) that circumstances favoured the growth of a strong Chandella power. Harsha seems to have made himself important by reinstating on the throne the contemporary Pratīhāra king who had suffered defeat at the hands of the Rāshṭrakūṭa Indra III (A. D. 917) of the Deccan. The consolidation of the Chandella power increased with the ambitious projects of his son Yaśovarman *alias* Lakshmavarman. A Khajurāho epigraph of the time of his son, dated A. D. 953-54, tells us that Yaśovarman easily conquered the mountain of

Kālañjara, successfully fought his neighbours and erected a 'charming splendid home of Vishṇu which rivals the peaks of the mountain of snow'. This temple has been identified by Cunningham with the Vaishṇava temple at Khajurāho known as that of Rāmachandra, Lakshmaṇa or Chaturbhuja (below, p. 22).

Yaśovarman was succeeded by his son Dhaṅga (*c*. A. D. 950-1002), who, according to another Khajurāho inscription, fought many more wars, and, according to a Mau inscription, 'obtained an empire' after defeating the king of Kanauj. Some of the temples of Khajurāho no doubt belong to his reign, for an inscription, now fixed at the Viśvanātha temple (below, p. 21), credits Dhaṅga with the erection of a temple 'with a spire white as the autumnal clouds' to house a *liṅga* of emerald. The temple of Vaidyanātha, no longer extant, contained an inscription recording the building of a temple by one Kokkala in A. D. 1000-1, a year falling within the reign of Dhaṅga.

The next important king was Dhaṅga's grandson Vidyādhara, mentioned by Ibnu'l-Athīr, a Muslim chronicler, as Bīdā and described by him as the most powerful Indian ruler of his time.[1] In 1022 Maḥmūd of Ghazna invested the fort of Kālinjar 'which has

[1] Ibnu'l-Athīr, *Al-Tārīkh-ul-Kāmil*, Bulak (1874), IX, pp. 115—16.

no equal in the whole country of Hindustan for strength and impregnability', and compelled Vidyādhara to submit. The importance of Khajurāho hereafter dwindled, for the Chandellas now concentrated on the forts of Mahobā, Ajaygarh and Kālinjar, from where they could offer better resistance to the Muslim invaders.

Later history.—The later history of the Chandellas need not detain us here, as it has no direct bearing on Khajurāho. The place is, however, mentioned by Abu-Rihān al-Bīrūnī, who accompanied Maḥmūd in his campaigns against Kālinjar in 1022 and speaks of the realm of Jejāhūtī and Kajurāha as its capital.[1]

A subsequent traveller, Ibn-i-Baṭṭuṭṭa, who visited the place in 1335, calls it Kajrāo, adding that 'there is a lake about a mile in length (possibly the present Khajurāho Sāgar or Ninorā Tal) and round the lake are temples in which are idols. At the centre of the lake are three domes (*chhatrīs* ?), and at each corner is a domed (?) structure, inhabited by Jogis with long matted hair. Their colour inclines to yellow, which arises out of austerities. Many of the Muslims of these parts attend on them to learn their art.'[2]

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[1] Al Bīrūnī's *Indica*, tr. E. Sachau (London, 1887), II, p. 202.

[2] Ibn-i-Baṭṭuṭṭa, tr. (Urdu) Muhammad Husain (Lahore, 1898), II, pp. 263-64.

Religion.—Excepting a few earlier rulers who were worshippers of Vishṇu, the Chandella kings appear to have been Śaivas. They were however not opposed to other sects and showed tolerance to Jainism. Buddhism appears to have disappeared in the land before the Chandellas came to power and the only noteworthy Buddhist relic is a colossal image of Buddha inscribed with the Buddhist creed in characters of the ninth or tenth century (below, p. 29, and pl. IX B).

The tutelary goddess, whose worship the Chandellas established throughout their kingdom, was Maniyā Devī, of whom a shrine exists at Mahobā.

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The Khajurāho group of temples, ranging in date from *c.* 950 to 1050, represents a brilliant, though short, phase in the Indo-Aryan style of temple-architecture. In beauty of outline and richness of carving these temples are unsurpassed by any kindred group of monuments in India.

All the temples, except the Chaunsaṭ Yoginī, which is built entirely of granite, and a few other small temples of granite and sandstone, are built of a buff-coloured sandstone imported from the quarries of Pannā, on the east bank of the Ken river. The facing stones in most cases are embedded in lac, lime concrete being generally used in the core. Iron clamps are also freely employed.

A typical Khajurāho temple is marked by a definitely individual character. It stands on a lofty terrace and is not surrounded by the usual enclosure-

wall. On plan, it is shaped like a Latin cross with its long axis from east to west (pl. XI). The three main structures are the cella (*garbhagṛiha*, the *deul* in Orissa), the assembly-hall (*maṇḍapa*, the *jagamohana* in Orissa) and the entrance portico (*ardhamaṇḍapa*). Between the cella and the assembly-hall is the vestibule (*antarāla*). In the more developed examples are added the transepts (*mahāmaṇḍapa*), together with the circumambulatory passage (*pradakshiṇa-patha*). These separate structures do not appear as independent buildings but are co-ordinated into a compact architectural synthesis.

Vertically, above the lofty terrace, the main part of the building is the high basement storey with a series of pronounced mouldings, above which are the walls and balconied openings of the interior compartments with two or three parallel bands of sculptures and, above all, is the grouping of roofs, culminating in a graceful spire (*śikhara*), crowned by the cogged ring-stone (*āmalaka*), which is surmounted by the finial (*stūpikā*) with the vase (*kalaśa*) as its most conspicuous part. The balconied window-openings, by the scanty light that they admit, help in creating a solemn atmosphere of half-light and half-darkness, and also break up the otherwise solid mass of the structure. Says Percy Brown : 'There are few more

attractive conceptions in the field of Indian architecture than these lovely balconied openings, and few, either structurally or aesthetically, more appropriate to their purpose."[1] The separate pyramidal roofs of the four structures rise in a regular gradation from the lowest over the *ardhamaṇḍapa* to the loftiest of the *garbhagṛiha*. The shape of the *śikharas* has been gracefully rendered by the rhythmic disposition of the main curves and the subtle distribution of the miniature turrets (*uruśriṅgas*) clustered all round the body of the main *śikhara* (*mūlamañjarī*), breaking up its mass and the same time accentuating the soaring effect (pl. I).

The interior of the temple is designed strictly according to the requirements of the ritual. There is only one entrance, that on the east, approached by a tall flight of steps. The doorway usually has a richly carved archway (*toraṇa*), through which one enters the porch leading to the portico. This has open sides, the ceiling being carried on pillars and sloping back-benches serving as dwarf-walls. A ribbed *chajjā* overhangs the whole. The main hall (*mahāmaṇḍapa*) has four square pillars in the centre supporting the beams of the roof with transepts on either side connecting with balconied openings.

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[1] Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture, Buddhist and Hindu Periods* (Bombay, 1942), p. 134.

In a temple with the inner circumambulatory passage, there exists another pair of transepts with window-openings round the sanctum and a third opening in the rear to illumine the passage. A shallow passage (*antarāla*) with a large moon-stone step (*chandraśilā*) leads upto the ornate doorway of the sanctum.

A few temples of Khajurāho are of the *pañchāyatana* or five-shrined type, *i.e.*, with four subsidiary shrines placed at the corners of the terrace, in addition to the main shrine.

The cusped and coffered ceilings of the Khajurāho temples have been designed and executed with the greatest ingenuity and artistic skill.

The two or three bands of sculptures all round the exterior of the temple and outside the sanctum (*antarabhitti*), following the alternate projections (*rathas*) and recesses (*salilāntara*) of the walls, portray, besides the figures of the principal gods and goddesses, Ashṭadikpālas (the regents of the eight quarters), *apsarases* and *surasundarīs* (celestial beauties), *mithunas* (couples), *vidyādharas* (flying celestials), *nāgas* (serpents), *śārdūlas* (leogriffs) etc. (pls. II-V).

The female caryatids or bracket-capitals of the interior representing *apsarases* or *śālabhañjikās* (women sporting with trees) in all sorts of sensuous

postures, with the ubiquitous figures of *gaṇas* or crouching dwarfs above and below, are masterpieces of plastic modelling seldom equalled in Indian art. To give an idea of the wealth of imagery on these temples, it may be mentioned that on the Kaṇḍariyā temple alone there are no less than eight hundred and seventytwo figures.

Khajurāho sculptures are conventionalized but not without vigour. Compared with the Orissan sculptures, they are more sophisticated. The profiles too are more complex and fuller of feeling.[1]

As in a few Orissan temples of the ninth to thirteenth centuries and some temples in Nepal and Tibet, obscene representation of couples in various erotic poses are quite common on the temple-walls at Khajurāho. A popular belief in Orissa makes these figures responsible for the temples not being struck by lightning and a similar belief exists at Khajurāho also. Some see in them the depiction of the fertility cult. Others attribute them to the desire of the sculptor to depict life in its naked reality. It is, however, not unlikely that some esotric religious

[1] A group of three sculptures from the Indian Museum—woman with the child, woman looking into a mirror and woman writing letter—is recorded to have come from Bhuvaneswar, Orissa. Stylistically, it belongs to the Khajurāho school, and it is not unlikely that the recording is wrong.

concept lies at the root of the practice.[1] These apparent vulgarities on the temple-walls may well be deliberate insertions to teach the practice of mastery over bodily functions.

[1] The ascription of a religious significance to these representations is supported by certain Tantric religious. practices of the Tibetan Lamas. The Tibetan shrines are said to have obscene idol-houses. When a Lama reaches a certain stage in his development towards spiritual conquest—the essence of Buddhism—he is allowed to pass through the portals of these obscene idols—houses for further spiritual progress. H. Foreman, *Through Forbidden Tibet* (London, 1936), pp. 107-09.

THE TEMPLES

Traditionally there existed eighty-five temples at Khajurāho, but at present only about twenty are existing. They may be conveniently divided into three broad groups, *viz.*, the western, eastern and southern. As all the temples are of a cognate style and are ascribed to the tenth-eleventh centuries, detailed descriptions need be given of only the principal ones. Of the others, only such particulars as demand notice will be mentioned.

The western group

The western group of temples, which the visitor encounters first, is situated to the west of the Bamiṭhā-Rājnagar road and is arranged in two rows.

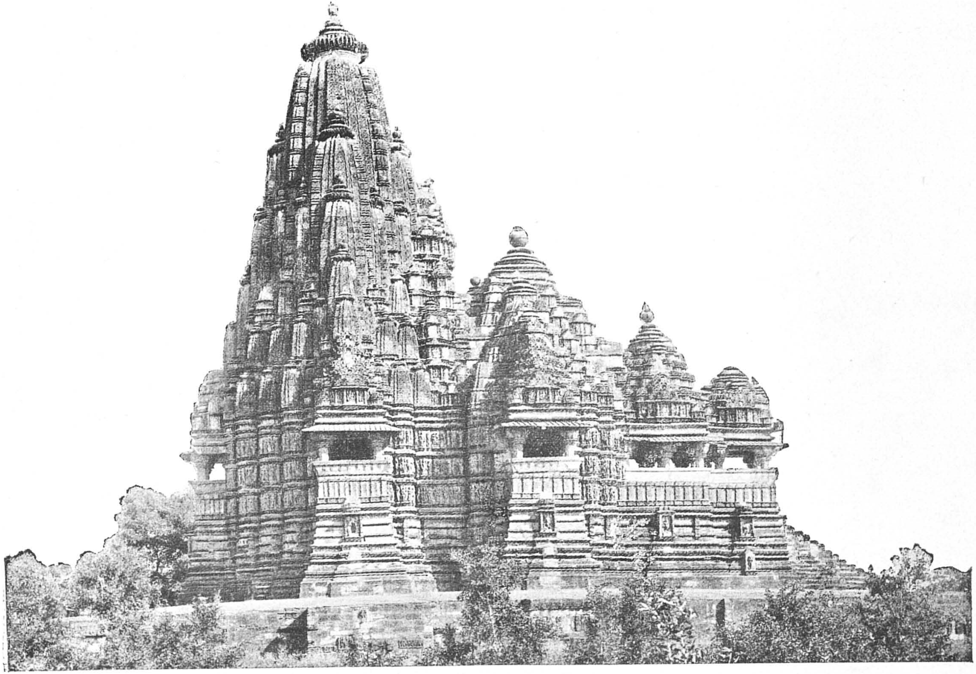
Chaunsaṭ Yoginī temple.—This hypaethral temple, situated on a low rocky ridge to the south-west of the Sibsāgar lake, is oblong on plan and stands on a massive platform, 18 ft. high. It is the only existing temple at Khajurāho built entirely of granite and

51 Dir. of Arch.

also the only one oriented north-east and south-west instead of the usual north and south. The courtyard, 103 ft. by 60 ft., is surrounded by sixty-five cells, of which only thirtyfive have survived. The cell in the middle of the south-west wall is larger than the other cells and beside it is a narrow opening giving access to the passage encircling the temple. The cells are roofed with small pyramidal spires or *śikharas*, the lower parts of which are adorned with triangular ornaments, in imitation of the *chaitya*-window motif. The mortice-holes in the granite lintels show that the cells were once furnished with double doors of wood. Excluding the larger cell, the other sixtyfour correspond to the number of *yoginīs* or female goblins, attendants of the goddess Kālī. The three *yoginī* images now to be seen are not in their original position; that of Mahishāsura-mardinī is in the larger cell and the two cells on either side house Māheśvarī, with her name inscribed on the pedestal, and the three-headed Brahmāṇī.

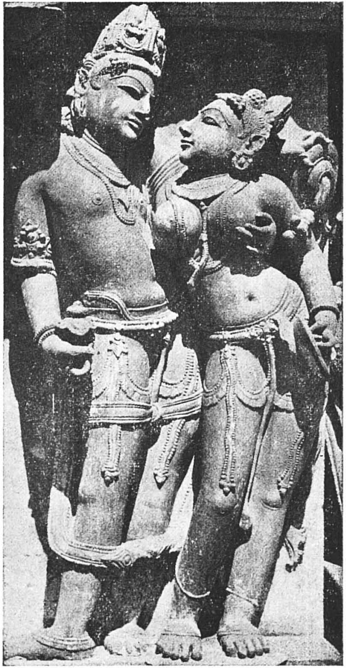
Cunningham was of the opinion that there was a temple in the centre of the courtyard consecrated to Kālī or Śiva, but excavation did not reveal any such evidence.

Though there is no dated inscription to show the age of the temple, there is no doubt that it is the earliest surviving temple at Khajurāho, assignable to *c.*



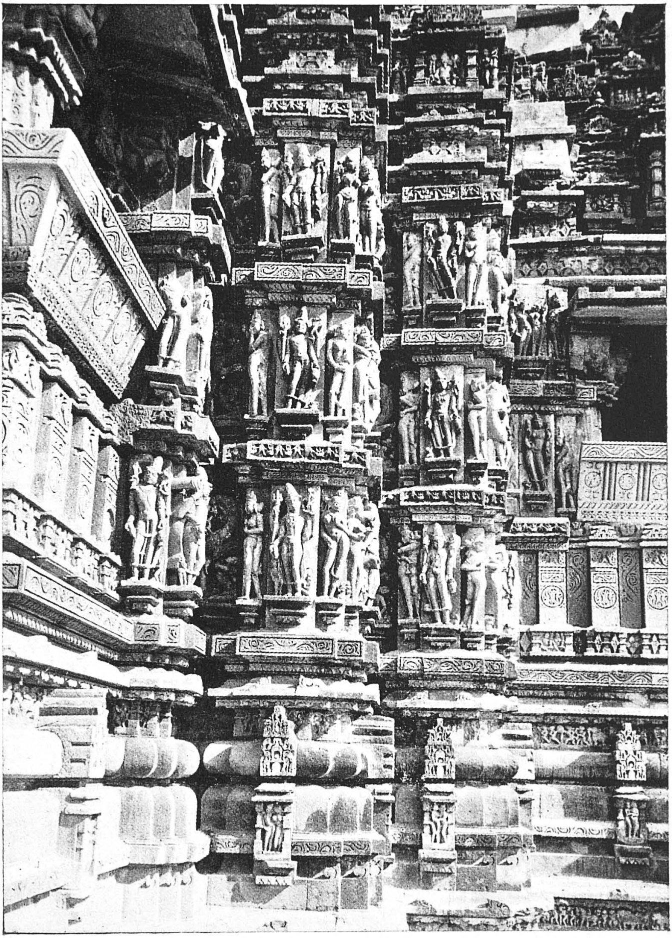
Kandāriya temple

PLATE II

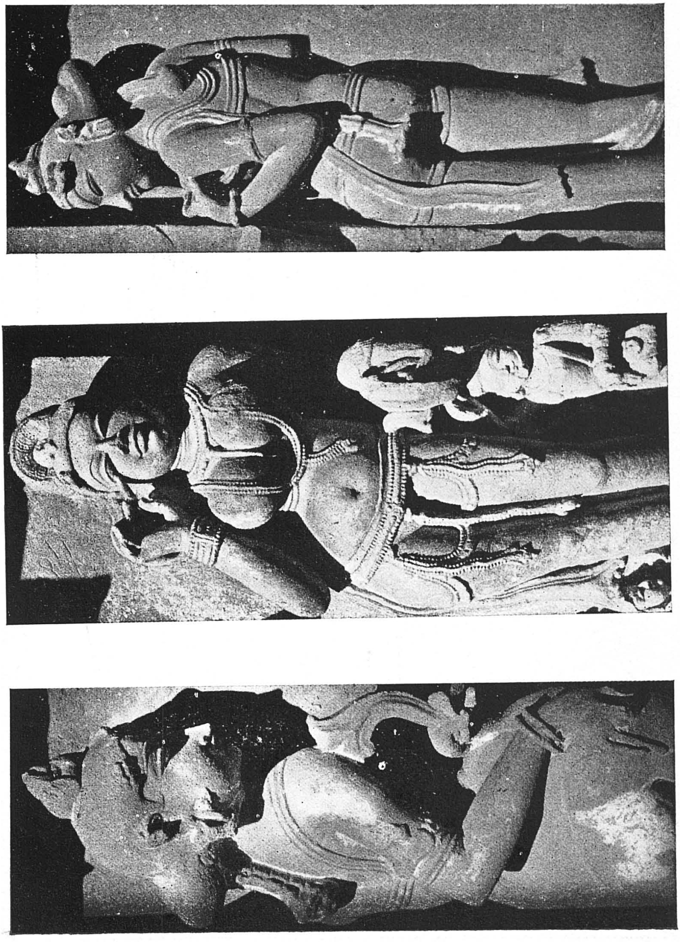


A. A *mithuna* Group

B. Agni



Kandāriya temple, sculptured façade

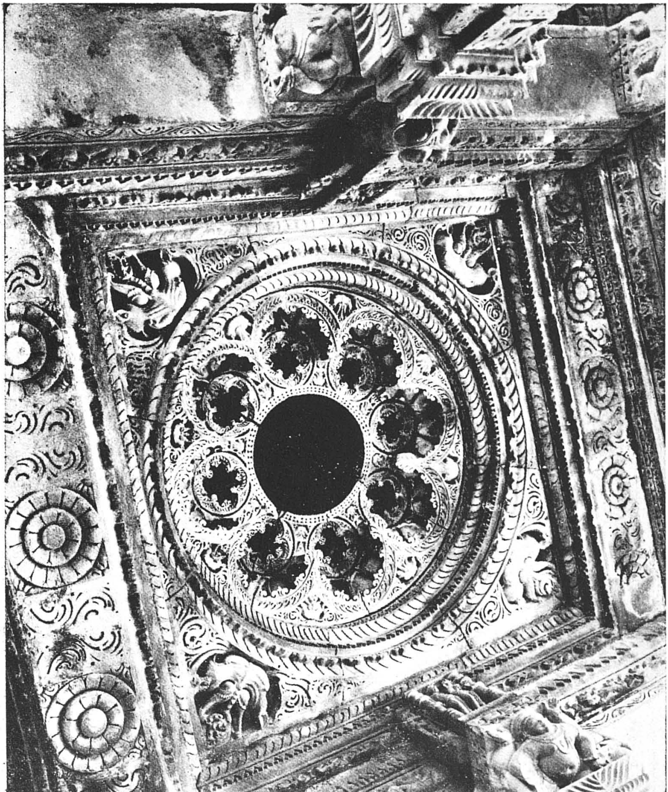


Surasundarī figures

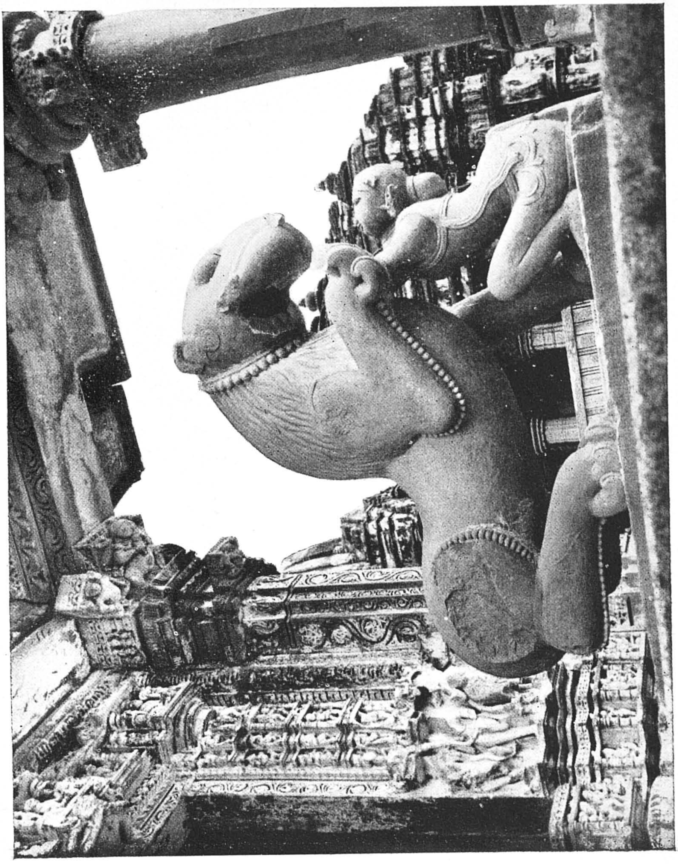
A. A sculptured group

B. A Surasundarī figure

PLATE VI

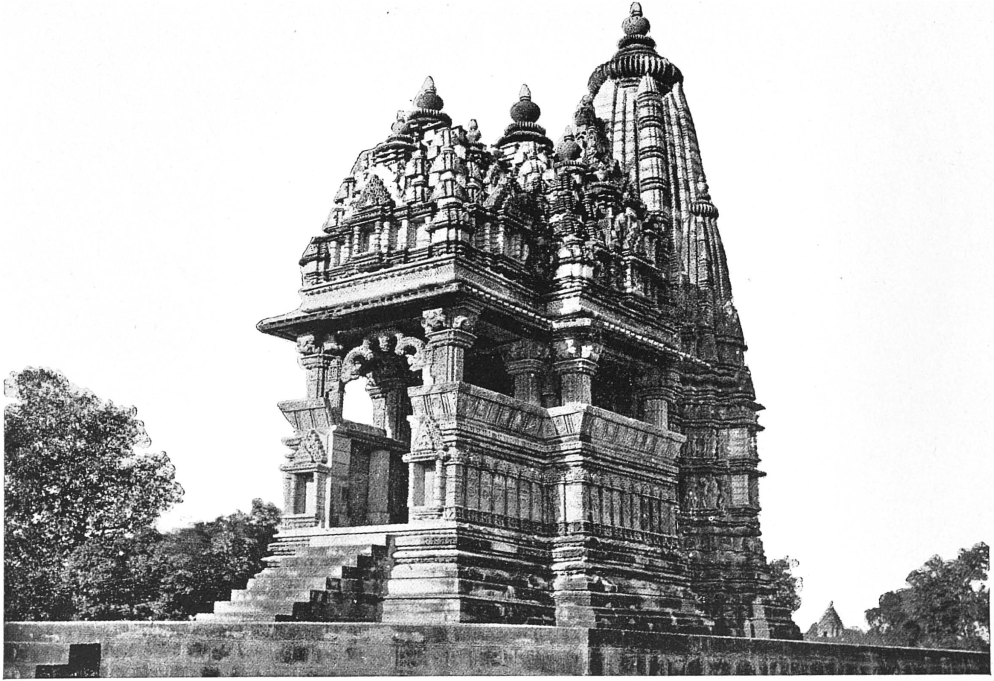


Carved ceiling of Kandāriya temple



Śardūla in Mahādeva temple

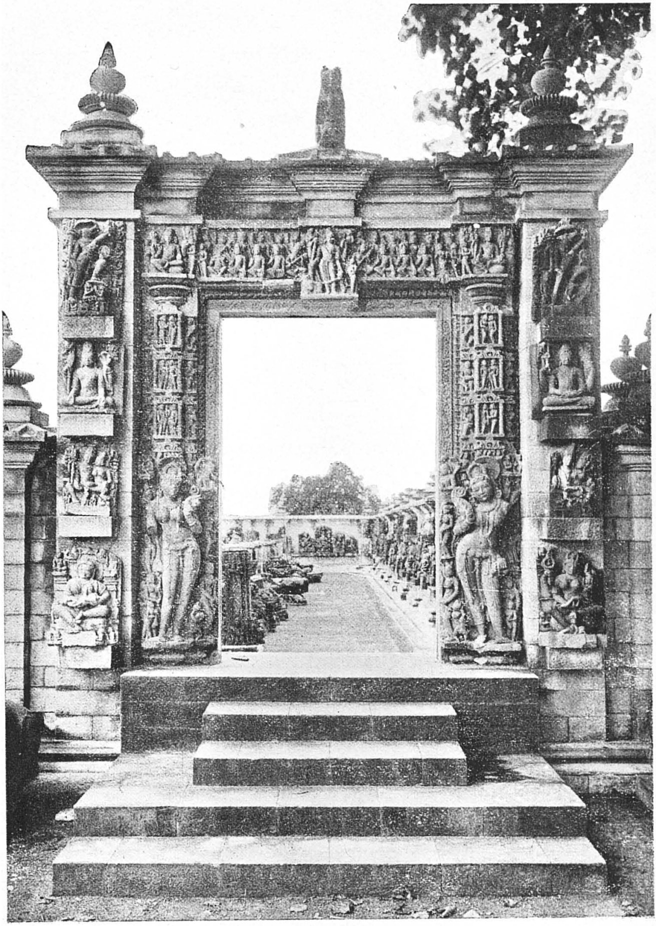
PLATE VIII



Javāri temple

A. Jaina sculpture in Śāntinātha temple

B. Statue of Buddha in Jardine Museum



Gateway in Jardine Museum

A. D. 900 on stylistic features of the images and the characters of the short epigraphs.

Lālguān Mahādeva temple.—About three furlongs to the west of the Chaunsaṭ Yoginī is a small temple of the early group, situated on the embankment of the lake called Lālguān Sāgar, and dedicated to Śiva. The temple, built partly of granite and partly of sandstone, consisted of a sanctum and a portico, the latter now missing.

Kandāriya temple.—This temple, situated to the north of the Chaunsaṭ Yoginī, is the largest of the extant Khajurāho temples and is a typical product of the local architecture (pl. I). In length it measures 102 ft. 3 in., in width 66 ft. 10 in. and in height 101 ft. 9 in. Originally it was a temple of the *pañchāyatana* type (above, p. 10), but the four subsidiary shrines at the corners of the platform and the stone benches between them have perished.

On plan, it is a double-armed cross with transepts not only to the *mahāmaṇḍapa* but also another pair with window-openings to give light to the ambulatory passage, while a similar opening illumines the passage in the rear. The six main parts of a full-fledged Khajurāho temple, *viz.*, the *ardhamaṇḍapa*, *maṇḍapa*, *mahāmaṇḍapa*, *antarāla*, *garbhagṛiha* and *pradakshiṇa-patha* (above, p. 9) are here co-ordinated into

an integrated whole. The lay-out affects the shape and architectural appearance of the exterior, which is an effective combination of bold projections and recesses, the whole being held together by horizontal bands of carvings. The platform of the temple differs from those of the other temples in that they have projections to the north, south and west, corresponding to the advanced oriel windows. Observe, at the entrance to this temple, the graceful arch (*toraṇa*) decorated with figures of deities, musicians, *kīrtimukhas*, *makaras*, *mithunas* etc. The *ardhamaṇḍapa* and *maṇḍapa* have richly carved and coffered ceilings (pl. VI), the ceiling of the *mahāmaṇḍapa* being composed of concentric overlapping circles. The door-jambs and lintel of the sanctum have rich floral carvings interspersed with figures of ascetics doing penance. The figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, on their respective vehicles, the *makara* (crocodile) and the *kūrma* (tortoise), occur at the bases of the jambs. Inside the sanctum, a plain square chamber, stands a marble *liṅga*, the symbol of Śiva.

The outside wall of the sanctum within the ambulatory passage has an elaborately moulded plinth decorated with two continuous rows of figures. The eight figures in the lower row portray the eight *dikpālas* or the regents of the eight directions. The plinth of the temple on the outside rises in a succession

of bold deep mouldings similar to those around the sanctum. Above these the triple belts of images, running round the sanctum and the transept, portray a galaxy of figures representing the principal divinities, *nāgas* and *nāgīs, apsarases, surasundarīs mithunas, śārdūlas* etc. (pls. IV and V). The pillared niches all over the body of the temple enshrine the figures of gods and goddesses in their various forms.

The women bracket-capitals of the *mahāmaṇḍapa* deserve special mention on account of the mastery over technique and poise of form and feeling that they represent. The finely chiselled bodies are cast into forms of immense loveliness, the faces revealing a mood of intense emotional feeling.

Mahādeva temple.—Between the Kandarīya and the Devī Jagadambi temples is a ruined temple of Mahādeva or Śiva, whose figure is carved on the middle of the lintel to the sanctum. The sanctum itself has perished, but the portico on the east is intact. A figure of *śārdūla* (leogriff) carved in the round is now housed in the portico (pl. VII).

Devī Jagadambi temple.—Beyond the Mahādeva temple to the north is the temple now known as the Devī Jagadambi or Kālī after the image of the river-goddess Gaṅgā, on her *vāhana*, the *makara*, which has been substituted for the original Vishṇu image.

In ignorance of its real character, this image has been painted black and is worshipped as Kālī. That it was dedicated to Vishṇu is evident from the image of the deity carved over the entrance to the sanctum. It was a *pañchāyatana* temple, but the subsidiary shrines on the platform have all perished. It is 73 ft. 3 in. long and 42 ft. 1 in. wide and on plan is a simple cross with only one pair of transepts to the *mahāmaṇḍapa*. It has no circumambulatory passage and the *maṇḍapa* is wanting. The cusped ceilings of the *ardhamaṇḍapa* and *mahāmaṇḍapa* demand notice. The external decorations closely resemble those of the Kandarīya and are equally sumptuous. Of the *dikpāla* figures, that of Yama on the southern side of the sanctum is remarkable for its expression, and the figure of the three-headed and eight-handed Śiva in the lower niche of the west façade is noteworthy.

Chitragupta or Bharatji's temple.—This temple is situated at a short distance to the north of Devī Jagadambi and like most of the temples of the place faces east. On plan it is identical with that of the Devī Jagadambi and measures 74 ft. 9 in. by 51 ft. 9 in. The construction of the ceiling of the hall is however different: the square is first reduced by the cutting off of its corners to an octagon, which in turn is converted into a series of diminishing circles. The temple is dedicated to Sūrya or the Sun-god and

an image of the deity, 5 ft. high, wearing high boots and driving in a chariot of seven horses, is enshrined in the sanctum. The lintel over the ornate doorway also shows the Sūrya image in the centre and the sides.

Of the carvings on the outside, a narrow recessed frieze in the plinth represents a party of stone-carriers as well as elephant-fights, processions, hunting scenes and dances. Another sculpture of interest is an eleven-headed image of Vishṇu enshrined in the central niche to the south of the sanctum. The central head is of Vishṇu himself, while the remaining ten represent his ten incarnations.

This temple has been extensively conserved.

Choprā tank.—Choprā is the name of a small square tank with flights of steps on its four sides, situated about 200 yards to the north-west of the Chitragupta temple. In the centre of the tank is a small pavilion supported on pillars which appears originally to have had four storeys, of which the lower ones alone have survived in a ruined condition. The structure was presumably a temple, but there is nothing now left to determine its dedication.

Viśvanātha and Nandī temple.—These two temples are the most northerly buildings of the east row of temples in the western group. They stand facing each other on a common terrace, approached by two

flights of steps on the north and south sides. A pair of elephants flanks the southern steps and a pair of lions the northern.

The Viśvanātha temple measures 89 ft. 1 in. in length and 45 ft. 10 in. in breadth and is dedicated to Śiva-Viśvanātha whose image is present at the centre of the lintel of the sanctum. Its plan closely follows that of the Kandāriya. Of the corner-shrines only those on the north-east and south-west are extant. The coffered ceilings and the other internal and external decorations are as rich and exquisite in workmanship as in the other temples. Especially noteworthy are the enchanting grace and elegance of the women bracket-capitals and the exquisitely carved *apsarases* on the outside wall of the sanctum. Of the latter, the following attract attention : woman fondling a child on the south, woman holding a bunch of fruits on her right hand and a parrot resting on her left wrist on the west and woman playing on a flute on the north.

Of the two inscriptions now built into the walls of the *maṇḍapa*, that on the right belongs to this temple. It is dated A. D. 1002-03 and records the building of a temple by King Dhaṅga, then dead, for the god Śambhu Marakateśvara and the dedication in it of a *liṅga* made of emerald. Though the inscription is posthumous, the temple must have been completed during the lifetime of Dhaṅga. The emerald

liṅga has vanished and has been replaced by one of common stone.

The other inscription does not belong to this temple but is said to have been found on the site of the now vanished temple of Vaidyanātha. It is dated A. D. 1001-2 and records the erection of a temple of Vaidyanātha and a number of buildings for pious Brāhmaṇas by one Kokkala.

The Nandī temple, 31 ft. 3 in. in length and 30 ft. 9 in. in width, stands facing the Viśvanātha and contains a highly polished colossal statue of Nandī, the bull vehicle of Śiva, 7 ft. 3 in. long and 6 ft. high. On plan, the temple is a square of twelve pillars with two-pillared balconies on the north, east and south and a portico, also carried on two pillars, on the west. It has a pyramidal roof and the ceiling is recessed in the usual manner by overlapping stones, by which a square is first reduced to an octagon and then to a circle. It is evidently of the same age as the Viśvanātha.

Pārvatī temple.—The Pārvatī temple is situated immediately to the south-west of the Viśvanātha temple. Only the sanctum remains but as its lintel bears on its centre a figure of Vishṇu, it is evident that the temple must have been dedicated to a Vaishṇava deity. The image at present worshipped is one of the river-goddess Gaṅgā, as is apparent from

her vehicle, the *makara*, and the name 'Pārvatī' temple by which it is locally known is a misnomer.

Lakshmaṇa (Rāmachandra or Chaturbhuja) temple.—This temple, originally consecrated to Vishṇu, is a *sāndhāra-prāsāda* of the *pañchāyatana* type. On plan and in size it is similar to the Viśvanātha, being 98 ft. in length and 45 ft. 3 in. in breadth. The four subordinate shrines are placed as usual at the corners of the terrace; a fifth one, dedicated to Garuḍa, has, however, disappeared and the shrine is now called the Devī temple.

The entrance to the temple is decorated with an elegant *toraṇa* and the ceiling of the *maṇḍápa* is artistically sculptured with ingenious devices of cusped and coffered circles. The lintel over the entrance to the sanctum bears the figure of Lakshmī at the centre, with Brahmā and Śiva to her left and right. The frieze above the lintel is carved with the figures of Navagrahas or the nine Planets and on the door-jamb are reliefs illustrating the churning of the ocean, the different incarnations of Vishṇu and fine scroll-work. Inside the sanctum is a four-armed, three-headed Vishṇu image (4 ft. 1 in. high) standing in an elaborately carved *toraṇa* frame. The middle head is human and the side ones are those of Narasiṁha and Varāha, the Man-lion and Boar incarnations of Vishṇu.

The inscribed slab now fixed into the wall of the portico is said to have been found when the temple was being repaired some time after 1843. The inscription, dated A. D. 953-54 and recorded in the reign of Dhaṅga, says that Yaśovarman *alias* Lakshmavarman built at Khajurāho a charming, splendid home of Vishṇu, in which he installed an image obtained from Devapāla, king of Kanauj.

On the outside are the usual statues in two bands. The elephant frieze on the plinth is noteworthy for the boldness of its outline. Of the sculptures in the subsidiary shrines, one on the east face of the south-eastern one, showing a teacher surrounded by a class of pupils, deserves mention.

The mouldings of the basement terrace are well-preserved and depict processions of horses and elephants and fighting scenes, showing soldiers armed with various types of weapons. A relief represents the god Revanta, the son of Sūrya, riding a horse with an umbrella held over his head by an attendant, and engaged in his favourite sport, boar-hunting.

The women bracket-capitals interspersed with the *śārdūlā*-capitals in the *mahāmaṇḍapa* and *antarāla* of this temple are masterpieces of plastic modelling.

Mātaṅgeśvara temple.—This is a plain square temple situated close to the south of the Lakshmaṇa temple. It is 24 ½ ft. square internally and 35 ft. square

externally with oriel windows on three sides and a projecting portico with a flight of steps on the east, the direction which the temple faces. The ceiling, formed of overlapping concentric circles, rests on an octagon, which in turn is supported on four pairs of pillars. The roof of the temple is pyramidal with receding steps. The four pillars in the corners are later additions to support the cracked lintels of the ceiling. The entire inner floor of the sanctum is occupied by a large Gaurī-paṭṭa, 20 ft. 4 in. in diameter and 4 ft. 5 in. in height, in which is set a highly polished colossal *liṅga* 3 ft. 8 in. in diameter and 8 ft. 4 in. in height. On the body of the *liṅga* are two later Persian and several Nāgarī epigraphs written in indelible ink.

This temple, in religious use, is regarded as the holiest of the Khajurāho temples.

Varāha temple.—This small open temple with fourteen pillars on a high plinth, situated in front of the Mātaṅgeśvara and dedicated to Varāha or the Boar incarnation of Vishṇu, is an oblong building, 20 ft. 6 in. by 16 ft., with a portico of two pillars on its west side. The roof of the temple, like that of the Mātaṅgeśvara, is a stepped pyramid, and the ceiling is formed of overlapping rectangles of plain stones, the opening at the top being closed by a pair of slabs carved with a full-blown lotus.

... MADRAS

The colossal monolithic statue of the boar, 8 ft. 9 in. in length and 5 ft. 9 in. in height, stands on a low pedestal at the centre of the temple. The entire body, head and legs of the boar are carved with the multiple figures of Hindu gods and godesses, including Brahmā, Vishṇu, Śiva, Sarasvatī, Gaṅgā, *nāgas*, *gandharvas*, *dikpālas* and the Planets. The figure of the Earth-goddess (Pṛithvī) is broken and only traces of her feet remain on the pedestal. In the pedestal under the boar are the remains of a long and sinuous serpent figure in a devotional attitude.

The eastern group

The eastern group of temples, situated in close proximity to the village, includes three more Brāhmaṇical temples known as the Brahmā, Vāmana and Javāri, and three large Jaina temples, the Ghanṭai, Ādinātha and Pārśvanatha.

Statue of Hanūmān.—This colossal statue of Hanūmān, the monkey-god, is enshrined in a modern temple situated about half-way between the western group of temples and the Khajurāho village. It is interesting only on account of a short dedicatory inscription on its pedestal, dated 316 of the Harsha era (A. D. 922), thus being the oldest inscription at the place.

Brahmā temple.—This temple, built partly of granite and partly of sandstone, occupies a fine position on the bank of the Khajurāho Sāgar. The name Brahmā temple, by which it is locally known, is a misnomer, for the four-faced (*chaturmukha*) image enshrined on a pedestal in the sanctum is definitely a *liṅga*. The lintels above the doorway of the sanctum and the west window have figures of Vishṇu in the centre, but these portions are of a different stone and do not belong to the original temple.

The temple had a sanctum and a portico, the latter of which has now disappeared. On three sides of the sanctum are projections, the windows of which are fitted with thick stone lattices, a rare feature at Khajurāho. This temple, like the Lālguān Mahādeva, belongs to the early group.

Vāmana temple.—This temple, situated about a furlong to the north-east of the so-called Brahmā temple, measures 62 ft. 9 in. in length and 45 ft. 3 in. in breadth. It stands on an exceptionally high platform and is similar on plan to the temples of Devī Jagadambi and Chitragupta but is more massively built than either. The spire of the sanctum is of the usual form but without the miniature turrets. The image of Vāmana or the Dwarf incarnation of Vishṇu enshrined in the sanctum is 4 ft. 8 in. high. Among

the incarnations carved on its framework also appears Buddha in the *bhūmisparśamudrā* or earth-touching posture. There are only two bands of sculptures on the external walls. The more important groups in the niches of the upper row round the sanctum portray Brahmā with his consort on the south, the marriage of Śiva-Pārvatī on the west and Vishṇu with his consort on the north. The corresponding niches in the lower row contain images of Varāha, Narasiṁha and Vāmana.

Kākrā Mārh.—To the north and east of the Vāmana temple are several mounds marking the sites of ancient temples. The ruined Vaishṇava temple known as Kākrā Mārh is situated about three-quarters of a mile to the east of the Vāmana. Only the entrance to the sanctum and the four pillars of the transept exist.

Javāri temple.—This small but well-proportioned temple lies close to the north-east of the Khajurāho village and is dedicated to Vishṇu, whose four-armed image is enshrined in the sanctum (pl. VIII). It measures 39 ft. in length and 21 ft. 4 in. in breadth and consists of an *ardhamaṇḍapa*, a *mahāmaṇḍapa* and a *garbhagṛiha.* The carvings and the three ubiquitous bands of sculptures on the outside are as rich as on the larger temples.

The Jaina temples.—The Jaina temples are situated to the south-east of the village. They are, on the whole, architecturally similar to the Brāhmaṇical examples except that the balconied openings of the transcepts, such pronounced features of the other group, are absent here. In the Pārśvanātha temple (below, p. 31), however, to admit light into the *maṇḍapa* and the *pradakshiṇa-patha*, small perforated windows have been introduced on all the sides. The absence of the voids or balconied openings makes the sculptures on the outside run in parallel friezes without a break and as such appear somewhat monotonous. The sculptor, however, has introduced projecting pillared niches and occasionally a kind of miniature balcony with sloping balustrade (*āsana*) behind which is a group of small figures, to relieve monotony and give variety.

The depiction of Brāhmaṇical divinites all over on the Jaina temples is noteworthy and shows the toleration of the age.

Ghanṭai temple.—This is named after the bell-and-chain ornament on its pillars. The plan of the temple is similar to that of the Pārśvanātha temple (below, p. 31) and originally consisted of an *ardhamaṇḍapa*, *mahāmaṇḍapa*, an antechamber and *garbhagriha*. The latter three chambers were enclosed by a common ambulatory, the outer wall of

which has perished. The pillars of the portico are gracefully decorated with girdles of the symbolical *kīrtimukha* pattern with festoons of pearls and bells hanging from their mouths and interlaced semi-circles containing figures of ascetics, *vidyādharas* and *mithuna* couples. The coffered ceiling of the *ardhamaṇḍapa*, a part of which has disappeared, is bordered by rows of panels, depicting groups of musicians, dancing and playing on several kinds of instruments.

Cunningham was first of the opinion that this was a Buddhist structure, relying mainly on the find from the outside of the temple of a large seated Buddha figure, now in the local museum, with the Buddhist creed engraved on it in characters assignable to the ninth century (pl. IX B). The clearance of the interior, however, led to the find of several Digambara Jaina images and left no doubt of its origin. Above the entrance to the temple is an image of an eight-armed Jaina goddess riding on Garuḍa and holding various weapons and at each end of the lintel is the figure of a Jaina Tīrthaṅkara. The nine figures in the intervening space on the left represent the nine Planets ; what the eight animal-headed figures on the right represent is not clear. The frieze above the lintel depicts the sixteen symbolic representations, referable to the sixteen dreams or conceptions of the mother of Mahāvīra.

The south-eastern group

South-east of the Ghanṭāi temple is situated a group of Jaina temples, enclosed within a modern compound wall. Besisde those of Ādinātha, Pārśvanātha and Śāntinātha, there are several modern Jaina temples built on the ruins of old temples. A number of ancient sculptures of Tīrthaṅkaras are built into the enclosure walls. Many of these bear short dated inscriptions.

The Ādinātha temple is smaller than the Pārśvanātha (below, p. 31) and is located immediately to its north. It has only three chambers, of which the *ardhamaṇḍapa* is a modern addition. Over the entrance to the sanctum is a four-armed Jaina goddess with other goddesses to her right and left. The frieze above the lintel depicts the sixteen auspicious Jaina symbols. The original Tīrthaṅkara image enshrined in the sanctum is missing and a modern image of Ādinātha is in its place. On the outside the three ubiquitous bands of sculptures run all round the temple. The figures in the pillared niches represent the principal Jaina goddesses holding their respective symbols (*āyudhas*) and riding on their distinguishing vehicles. The *vidyādhara* figures of the topmost frieze are noteworthy for their dynamic movement. The base of the spire over the *antarāla* is characterized by a belt of pillared niches surmounted by *chaitya*-arch pediments containing *kīrtimukhas, makara*-heads and

other devices. Figures of mythical lions and elephants are shown on the top and stepped sides of the pediments.

The Pārśvanātha temple is the largest and finest of the Jaina temples now surviving at Khajurāho. It is 68 ft. 2 in. long and 34 ft. 11 in. broad and faces east. The addition of a little shrine to the back of the sanctum is a distinguishing feature. The portico preceding this shrine is no longer extant. Internally, the temple consists of three chambers, the *mahāmaṇḍapa*, *antarāla* and *garbhagṛiha.* These chambers are surrounded by a common ambulatory passage, encompassed on all sides by a solid wall with pilasters on the inside, to support the ceiling. In the absence of balconied openings, perforated windows are introduced to admit diffused light into the passage. The recessed ceiling of the portico is a masterpiece of carving, from the centre of which hangs a pendant decorated with chain and floral patterns and terminating in a pair of intertwined flying human figures. On the entrance door to the temple is a ten-armed Jaina goddess riding on Garuḍa, while on the lintel of the sanctum are seated and standing Jaina figures. The sanctum has an ornamental throne with the figure of a bull carved in front. The original image must therefore have been of that of the first

Tīrthaṅkara, Ṛishabhanātha or Ādinātha, whose symbol is the bull. The modern image of Pārśvanātha was installed in 1860.

The *apsaras* figures on the outer walls of the sanctum are masterpieces of sculpture and display superb grace in their modelling. Specially noteworthy are the figures on the northern side exhibiting a woman fondling a child, a woman writing letters, a little figure extracting a thorn from a woman's foot and a woman at her toilet. The decorations of the massive wall which surrounds the temple consist of bold deep mouldings of the plinth and above these are the tiers of statues of Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras, Hindu gods and goddesses, *dikpālas* etc. The inclusion of purely Brāhmaṇical figures in the decoration of a Jaina temple is noteworthy.

On the left jamb of the entrance there is a Nāgarī inscription of eleven lines, dated A. D. 955[1] and recording the homage of a certain votary, Pāhila by name, and the donation of gardens (*vāṭikā*) to the temple in the reign of Dhaṅga. The right jamb is inscribed with a pilgrim's record of no historical value and a magic square of 16 figures giving a total of 34 whether read horizontally, vertically or diagonally.

[1]The characters of the inscription are much later than those of the other tenth century inscriptions; it appears therefore that the record is a later copy of an earlier inscription.

Close to the south of the Pārśvanātha temple is a modern temple known as the temple of Śāntinātha. It contains a few ancient Jaina sculptures (pl. IX A) including a standing image, 14 ft. high, of a Jaina Tīrthaṅkara which is proclaimed by the bull carved on the pedestal to be Ṛishabhadeva (Ādinātha). Cunningham mentions the existence on the pedestal of a short dedicatory inscription dated A. D. 1027-28. The epigraph is, however, now hidden under plaster and as such nothing definite can be said about its correct decipherment. But it seems certain that the colossus is in its original position.

The southern group

The southern group of temples comprises the Dulādeo and the Chaturbhuja or Jatkari temples.

Dulādeo temple.—The Dulādeo temple, referred to as 'Kunwar Math' by Cunningham, is situated south of the Ghanṭāi temple and is one of the finest temples at Khajurāho. That it was originally dedicated to Śiva is certain from the figure of that god carved on the centre of the lintel over the entrance to the sanctum. The *liṅga* now enshrined in the sanctum is a substitute for the original image.

The temple measures 69 ft. 2 in. by 40 ft. 3 in. and consists of the usual five chambers without the ambulatory passage. The ceiling of the *mahāmaṇḍapa* is

arranged differently from that of any other temple, being formed of successively diminishing circles of overlapping stones.

There is no large inscription on the temple, but the word *vasala,* inscribed in different places, might be the name of the leading sculptor.

The *śālabhañjikā* (woman and the tree) bracket capitals of the *mahāmaṇḍapa* are noteworthy for their superb grace and elegance. The *apsaras* figures on the pilasters of the interior of the *ardhamaṇḍapa* and the *vidyādharas* on the upper most belt on the outside demand attention for their dynamic movement and high tension.

The temple has been extensively conserved.

Jatkari or Chaturbhuja temple.—This temple is situated about three furlongs to the south of the Jatkari village and faces west. It is dedicated to Vishṇu and a colossal image of the deity, 9 ft. high, is enshrined in the sanctum. The image is four-armed and exquisitely decorated with a crown and other ornaments. The lower hands are broken; the upper right hand is raised in the *abhaya-mudrā* and bears a circular mark on the palm, the left holds the stalk of a lotus and a sacred book tied with string.